

**OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS
RENDERED BY THE INTER-
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON
ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE**

Edited by

FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.
Secretary to the Commission

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OPINION 438

Validation under the Plenary Powers of the generic name
Rhinopteraspis Jaekel, 1919 (Class Ostracodermi)

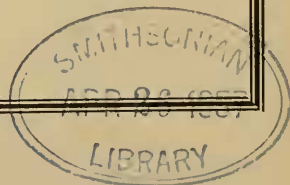
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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

COMPOSITION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE RULING GIVEN IN OPINION 438

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B. The Members of the Commission

Arranged in order of precedence by reference to date of election or of most recent re-election, as prescribed by the International Congress of Zoology

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Dr. Alden H. MILLER (*Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, U.S.A.*) (29th October 1954)

Doc. Dr. Ferdinand PRANTL (*Národní Museum v Praze, Prague, Czechoslovakia*) (30th October 1954)

Professor Dr. Wilhelm KÜHNELT (*Zoologisches Institut der Universität, Vienna, Austria*) (6th November 1954)

Professor F. S. BODENHEIMER (*The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel*) (11th November 1954)

Professor Ernst MAYR (*Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.*) (4th December 1954)

Professor Enrico TORTONESE (*Museo di Storia Naturale, "G. Doria," Genova, Italy*) (16th December 1954)

OPINION 438

VALIDATION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF THE GENERIC NAME "RHINOPTERASPIS" JAEKEL, 1919 (CLASS OSTRACODERMI)

RULING :—(1) Under the Plenary Powers the generic name *Archaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855 (Class Ostracodermi) is hereby suppressed for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy.

(2) The under-mentioned generic name is hereby placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* with the Name Number 1043 : *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919 (Class Ostracodermi), as validated under the Plenary Powers under (1) above (gender : feminine) (type species, by original designation : *Palaeoteuthis dunensis* Roemer, 1855).

(3) The under-mentioned specific name is hereby placed on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* with the Name Number 1115 : *dunensis* Roemer, 1855, as published in the combination *Palaeoteuthis dunensis* (specific name of type species of *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919).

(4) The under-mentioned generic names are hereby placed on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology* with the Name Numbers 830 and 831 respectively :—

- (a) *Palaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855 (a junior homonym of *Palaeoteuthis* d'Orbigny, [1850]) ;
- (b) *Archaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855, as suppressed under the Plenary Powers under (1) above,

I. THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On 14th October 1954 Dr. Errol I. White (*British Museum (Natural History), London*) and Dr. H. W. Ball (*British Museum (Natural History), London*) submitted to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature the following application in which they asked for the suppression under the Plenary Powers of the generic name *Archaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855, a name which had not been used since the paper in which it was first published, in order to validate its junior objective synonym, the well-established name *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919 (Class Ostracodermi) :—

**Proposed use of the Plenary Powers to validate the generic name
“*Rhinopteraspis*” Jaekel, 1919, by suppressing the name
“*Archaeoteuthis*” Roemer, 1855 (Class Ostracodermi)**

By ERROL I. WHITE, Ph.D., D.Sc.

(*Department of Geology, British Museum (Natural History), London*)

and

H. W. BALL, B.Sc., Ph.D.

(*Department of Geology, British Museum (Natural History), London*)

The object of the present application is to seek the assistance of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature for preserving the well-established generic name *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919, by the use of its Plenary Powers for suppressing its senior objective synonym *Archaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855, a name which has been completely overlooked, not having been used since the time when it was first published. The facts of this case are summarised in the following paragraphs.

2. In 1855 (*Palaeontographica* 4 : 72) Roemer (F.) described a fossil from the Lower Devonian of the Eifel as the guard of a species of cuttlefish, for which also he established a new genus. He named this species *Palaeoteuthis dumensis*. In the same year, finding that the generic name *Palaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855, was invalid, being a junior homonym of the name *Palaeoteuthis* d'Orbigny, [1850] (*Prodr. Paléont.* 1 : 327) Roemer published the substitute name *Archaeoteuthis* (1855, in Bronn, *Lethaea geogn.* (3rd ed.) 1 : 520). However, three years later T. H. Huxley pointed out (1861, *Quart. J. geol. Soc. Lond.* 17 : 163)

that the specimen described by Roemer was not a cephalopod guard, as Roemer had supposed, but was the ventral plate of a pteraspid "fish" (Ostracoderm) and referred it to the genus *Pteraspis* Kner, 1847, itself, since it showed, in his opinion, no characters of generic value to differentiate it from *Pteraspis*. (We may here note that the specimen is imperfect and incidentally that in the original paper it was figured upside down, and further that the ventral plates (or discs) do not show generic characters in most pteraspids.) Since the publication of Roemer's papers nearly one hundred years ago, the name *Archaeoteuthis* has not been used by any author. Up to 1919, the type species (*P. dunensis*) was referred either to *Pteraspis* or to its junior synonym *Scaphaspis* Lankester, 1865.

3. In 1919 O. Jaekel (*SitzBer. Ges. Naturf. Freunde Berlin 1919* : 74) made *Palaeoteuthis dunensis* Roemer the type species of a new genus, to which he gave the name *Rhinopteraspis* on the ground of the characteristic dorsal armour found associated with ventral plates referable to the foregoing species. It has since been shown by Brotzen (1936, *Ark. Zool.* 28A (No. 22) : 13) and by White (1938, *Quart. J. geol. Soc. Lond.* 94 : 85) that a number of forms share the outstanding characters of Jaekel's genus. These forms are of stratigraphical significance, and in consequence the name *Rhinopteraspis* has come increasingly into use.

4. In these circumstances it is recommended that the name *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919, should be validated by the suppression of the name *Archaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855, under the Plenary Powers, a name which has not been used since its original publication, is embarrassingly inappropriate, and, when first published, was accompanied by no generic characters relevant to the group to which it belongs. The International Commission is accordingly asked :—

- (1) to use its Plenary Powers for the purpose of suppressing the generic name *Archaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855, for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy ;
- (2) to place the under-mentioned generic names on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* : *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919 (gender : feminine) (type species, by original designation : *Palaeoteuthis dunensis* Roemer, 1855) ;
- (3) to place the under-mentioned specific name on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* : *dunensis* Roemer, 1855, as published in the combination *Palaeoteuthis dunensis* (specific name of type species of *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919) ;

(4) to place the under-mentioned generic names on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology* :—

- (a) *Palaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855 (a junior homonym of *Palaeoteuthis* d'Orbigny, [1850]) ;
- (b) *Archaeoteuthis* Roemer, 1855 (as suppressed under the Plenary Powers under (1) above).

5. The genus *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel is not the type genus of a taxon belonging to any family-group and accordingly no question arises of placing any such name on the *Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology*.

II. THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

2. Registration of the present application : Upon the receipt of the joint application by Dr. White and Dr. Ball the question of the validation under the Plenary Powers of the generic name *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919, was allotted the Registered Number Z.N.(S.) 863.

3. Publication of the present application : The present application was sent to the printer on 22nd November 1954 and was published on 31st January 1955 in Part 2 of Volume 11 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* (White & Ball, 1955, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **11** : 66—67).

4. Issue of Public Notices : Under the revised procedure prescribed by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 51—56) Public Notice of the possible use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its Plenary Powers in the present case was given on 31st January 1955 (a) in Part 2 of Volume 11 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* (the Part in which the joint application by Dr. White and Dr. Ball was published) and (b) to the other prescribed serial publications. In addition such

Notice was given also to a number of general zoological serial publications and to certain palaeontological serial publications in Europe and America.

5. Support received : Support for the action proposed in this case was received from four specialists, two in the United Kingdom and two in Germany. The communications so received are reproduced in the immediately following paragraphs.

6. Support received from Dr. D. L. Dineley (University College of the South West, Exeter) : On 12th April 1955 Dr. D. L. Dineley (*University College of the South West, Exeter*) addressed the following letter of support for the present case to the Office of the Commission (Dineley, 1955, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **11** : 266) :—

I write in support of the recommendations made by E. I. White and H. W. Ball. The recommendations are, I am sure, perfectly reasonable and necessary. The genus *Rhinopteraspis* is likely to be of considerable importance in the study of Lower Devonian stratigraphy in Britain as work upon the British pteraspids continues and it is desirable that matters of nomenclature such as these be settled at the earliest date.

7. Support received from Professor Leonard J. Wills (Birmingham, England) : On 17th April 1955 Professor Leonard J. Wills (*Birmingham, England*) addressed the following letter of support for the present case to the Office of the Commission (Wills, 1955, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **11** : 266) :—

I would like to support the proposal by E. I. White and H. W. Ball to validate the name *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, by suppressing the name *Archaeoteuthis* Roemer, as I think this would be a considerable improvement for the reasons stated in their paper.

8. Support from Professor W. Gross (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany) : On 25th April Professor W. Gross (*Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany*) intimated his support in the present case in the following terms :—

Dem Antrag der Herren Dr. E. I. White und Dr. H. W. Ball (Commission Reference Z.N.(S.) 863), den formal gültigen Namen

Archaeoteuthis Roemer (1855) durch den Namen *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel (1919) zu ersetzen, stimme ich vollinhaltlich zu. Die Begründung des Antrages durch die genannten Autoren ist klar und überzeugend. Die Frage, ob die Erhebung der bisherigen Art *Pteraspis dunensis* zu einer neuen Gattung *Rhinopteraspis* notwendig ist, kann verschieden beurteilt werden. Sie betrifft aber nicht den Inhalt des Antrages. Wird die Abtrennung der Gattung durchgeführt, so ist der bereits vielfach genannte Name *Rhinopteraspis* unbedingt dem irreführenden und kaum in Gebrauch gewesenen Namen *Archaeoteuthis* vorzuziehen.

9. Support from Dr. Wolfgang Schmidt (Amt für Bodenforschung Landesstelle Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany) : On 16th May 1955 Dr. Wolfgang Schmidt addressed a letter to the Commission in the following terms :—

Unter der Voraussetzung, dass die Bildung einer selbständigen Gattung für die bisher unter dem Namen *Pteraspis dunensis* Roemer, 1855, bekannte Art gerechtfertigt erscheint, stimme ich dem Ersuchen der beiden Autoren White & Ball zu.

10. No objection received : No objection to the action proposed in the present case was received from any source.

III. THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

11. Issue of Voting Paper V.P.(55)18 : On 9th November 1955 a Voting Paper (V.P.(55)18) was issued in which the Members of the Commission were invited to vote either for, or against, "the proposal relating to the generic name *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel, 1919, as set out in Points (1) to (4) in paragraph 4 on page 57 of Volume 11 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*" [i.e. in the paragraph numbered as above in the paper reproduced in the first paragraph of the present *Opinion*].

12. The Prescribed Voting Period : As the foregoing Voting Paper was issued under the Three-Month Rule, the Prescribed Voting Period closed on 9th February 1956.

13. Particulars of the Voting on Voting Paper V.P.(55)18 : At the close of the Prescribed Voting Period, the state of the voting on Voting Paper V.P.(55)18 was as follows :—

(a) *Affirmative Votes had been given by the following twenty-five (25) Commissioners (arranged in the order in which Votes were received) :*

Holthuis ; Hering ; Vokes ; Bodenheimer ; Bradley (J.C.) ; Mayr ; Riley ; Dymond ; Prantl ; Sylvester-Bradley ; Lemche ; Esaki ; do Amaral ; Hankó ; Key ; Boschma ; Jaczewski ; Mertens ; Cabrera ; Stoll ; Bonnet ; Miller ; Tortonese ; Kühnelt ; Hemming ;

(b) *Negative Votes :*

None ;

(c) *Voting Papers not returned :*

None.

14. Declaration of Result of Vote : On 10th February 1956, Mr. Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission, acting as Returning Officer for the Vote taken on Voting Paper V.P. (55)18, signed a Certificate that the Votes cast were as set out in paragraph 13 above and declaring that the proposal submitted in the foregoing Voting Paper had been duly adopted and that the decision so taken was the decision of the International Commission in the matter aforesaid.

15. Preparation of the Ruling given in the present “ Opinion ” : On 18th October 1956, Mr. Hemming prepared the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* and at the same time signed a Certificate

that the terms of that Ruling were in complete accord with those of the proposal approved by the International Commission in its Vote on Voting Paper V.P.(55)18.

16. Original References : The following are the original references for the names placed on *Official Lists* and *Official Indexes* by the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* :—

Archaeoteuthis Roemer, 1855, in Bronn, *Lethaea geogn.* (ed. 3) 1 : 520

dunensis, *Palaeoteuthis*, Roemer, 1855, *Palaeontographica* 4 : 72

Palaeoteuthis Roemer, 1855, *Palaeontographica* 4 : 72

Rhinopteraspis Jaekel, 1919, *SitzBer. Ges. Naturf. Freunde Berlin* 1919 : 74

17. Family-Group-Name Aspects : It is explained in the application submitted in the present case that the generic name *Rhinopteraspis* Jaekel has not been taken as the base for a family-group name.

18. The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in dealing with the present case, and the present *Opinion* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

19. The present *Opinion* shall be known as *Opinion* Four Hundred and Thirty-Eight (438) of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London, this Eighteenth day of October, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Six.

*Secretary to the International Commission
on Zoological Nomenclature*

FRANCIS HEMMING